

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1394

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BERLIN FOR C. B. SALMON, EMBASSY THE HAGUE POL/ LABOR OFFICER

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PGOV, NL

SUBJECT: REACTION TO GOVERNMENT DECLARATION

REF: THE HAGUE 2424 AND THE HAGUE 2431

SUMMARY: LEADER OF LARGEST OPPOSITION PARTY (WIEGEL, LIBERAL PARTY) STRONGLY CRITICIZED PRIMIN DEN UYL' S GOVT DECLARATION, PARTICULARLY DEFENSE POLICY, RENT POLICY, COMPENSATION POLICY FOR EXPROPRIATED LAND, AND FINANCIAL POLICIES. LEADERS OF CATHOLIC AND ANTI- REVOLUTIONARY PARTIES, EMBERS OF WHOM ARE IN DEN UYL CABINET, INDICATED GENERAL SUPPORT FOR DEN UYL POLICIES, BUT ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THEY WOULD NOT BE RUBBER STAMP SUPPORTERS OF DEN UYL GOVT. TRADE UNION FEDERATIONS INDICATED QUALIFIED SUPPORT, AND LARGE EMPLOYER ORGANIZATIONS WERE CAUTIOUS IN THEIR CRITICISM OF GOVT PROGRAM. END SUMMARY.

1. WIEGEL, RELISHING ROLE AS " LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION", OPENED DEBATE ON GOVT DECLARATION MAY 28 AND STRONGLY ATTACKED POLICIES OF DEN UYL GOVT. ACCORDING TO PRESS
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ACCOUNTS, WIEGEL CALLED PLANS FOR CUT IN 1973 DEFENSE BUDGET WRONG, CRITICIZED LAND POLICY (TO RELATE COMPENSATION ON EXPROPRIATED LAND TO CURRENT VALUE RATHER THAN VALUE ASSOCIATED WITH INTENDED GOVT USE) AND RENT POLICY (LIMITATION OF INCREASES), AND REFERRED TO GOVT PROGRAM AS FINANCIALLY UNREALIZABLE. WIEGEL ALSO ATTACKED " LEVELLING" POLICY ASSOCIATED WITH PLANS FOR REDISTRIBUTION OF INCOME, AND SAID LOWER INCOME GROUPS, RATHER THAN BEING HELPED BY DEN UYL POLICIES, WOULD BE HURT BY HIGHER TAXES.

2. ANDRIESSEN OF CATHOLIC PARTY SNIPED AT CHOICE OF HOUSING MINISTER (GRUYTERS OF D'66, WHO WAS PARTICULARLY SHARP CRITIC OF CONFESSIONAL PARTIES DURING 1972 ELECTION CAMPAIGN), AND WARNED THAT LABOR PARTY GOAL OF SAVING 1500 MILLION GUILDERS IN DEFENSE OVER NEXT FOUR YEARS WAS NOT PROPER POINT OF DEPARTURE IN FORMULATING DEFENSE POLICY. IN SPITE OF THESE, AND SOME OTHER CRITICISMS, ANDRIESSEN SAID HE HAD POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD DEN UYL CABINET.

3. AANTJES OF ARP WAS MORE CRITICAL, REFLECTING CLOSENESS OF DIVISION WITHIN HIS PARTY IN DECISION TO SUPPORT DEN UYL CABINET. HE CRITICIZED INTENTION TO MAKE CHANGES IN 1973 BUDGET, PARTICULARLY REDUCTION PLANNED FOR DEFENSE, AND SAID HIS PARTY WOULD NOT SUPPORT SUCH ACTIONS.

4. THE THREE TRADE UNION FEDERATIONS IN GENERAL TOOK POSITIVE VIEW OF NEW CABINET, IN PARTICULAR NOTING WITH APPROVAL STATEMENTS IN GOVT DECLARATION RELATING TO INCOME REDISTRIBUTION, BUT EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT DEN UYL DID NOT SPELL OUT IN GREATER DETAIL HIS PLANS TO COMBAT INFLATION. EMPLOYERS ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTING LARGE FIRMS EXPRESSED THEIR GOODWILL TOWARD DEN UYL GOVT, BUT ALSO REGISTERED OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED INCOMES POLICY AND NOTED LACK OF SPECIFICS ON GOVT'S ANTI-INFLATION POLICY. FEDERATION REPRESENTING INDEPENDENT RETAILERS (MIDDENSTAND) WERE MORE OPENLY CRITICAL, AS MEMBERS OF THIS FEDERATION FEEL THEY WILL BEAR BRUNT OF INCOME REDISTRIBUTION PROPOSALS.

5. PRESS COMMENT WAS GENERALLY ALONG LINES OF POLITICAL UNCLASSIFIED

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ORIENTATION OF INDIVIDUAL NEWSPAPERS. MOST MAJOR DAILIES RECOGNIZED FAR- REACHING NATURE OF PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN GOVT DECLARATION AND GAVE DEN UYL GOOD MARKS FOR AT LEAST HAVING GOOD INTENTIONS. MOST DAILIES, HOWEVER, INCLUDING SEVERAL SUPPORTERS OF DEN UYL GOVT, POINTED OUT POTENTIAL FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES IN CARRYING OUT AMBITIOUS POLICIES AND CONSEQUENT NEED TO ESTABLISH

SOUND FINANCIAL BASE FOR NEW PROGRAM.

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